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Hoover Scholars Priming for

Stanford Think Tank
Set to Shape Policy

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PALO ALTO, Calif. — Some of the most forceful conservative ideas advanced by the Reagan administration will come from a group of intellectuals ensconced at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace located on the Stanford University campus.

The institution, which prides itself on the perspective it gains in isolation from the day-to-day hurly-burly of Washington, seems assured of providing the new administration not only with new thinking but also the import of new personalities to shape policies.

"It would be presumptuous of me to measure our potential impact," says economist W. Glenn Campbell, 58, the somewhat shy institution "director" who was handpicked by the late President Herbert Hoover to revive the research factory's fortunes 20 years ago. "But we're not short on recommendations."

That observation is a modest one if the Hoover's celebrated personnel and prolific output are any guide. Scholars at Hoover are generally but by no means all conservative of mind, and they include such well-known names as economist Milton Friedman, physicist Edward Teller, philosopher Sidney Hook and sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset.

In the last year alone the institution's 60 scholars produced 31 books of heavy analysis of domestic issues and foreign affairs.

In its fourth printing is a 916-page dossier of essays called "The United States in the 1980s." Published in late January, the tome covers everything from welfare reform to environmental policy to energy, from arms control to CIA operations to studies of specific areas around the globe including the Middle East, Latin America and Africa.

"We like to think of the book as a kind of desk-top encyclopedia," says senior fellow Alvin Rabushka, who co-edited the book with foreign affairs specialist Peter Duignan. "It's not exactly bedtime reading. But when you need to consider the issues at hand, at least you can be conversant."

Evidently the White House agreed in the course of the presidential campaign. It ordered 52 copies to ferret out the intellectual underpinnings of the advice Ronald Reagan was getting and now will get in the course of his presidency.

Sixteen of the Hoover Institution's scholars are serving on task forces organized by the Reagan pre-inaugural team to prepare reports, among other things, on how to limit federal expenditures, reform the Social Security system and shape energy policy.

A guess at the Hoover is that perhaps six senior members of the institution will be decamping for Washington. Already on leave is senior fellow Martin Anderson, an economist who was a domestic policy adviser in the Nixon administration. He joined Reagan's campaign trail when the candidate began stumbling over facts and figures.

According to director Campbell, a friend of the president-elect since 1967 when Reagan became governor of California, none of the Hoover scholars has yet received a job offer with the incoming administration. But he readily concedes that the Hoover will be losing "some of our best brains." Adds Campbell, chairman of Reagan's education policy task force: "Any policy institution must think of public service first. They will go with my blessing."

That is not surprising. In 1975 Reagan was made an honorary fellow of the Hoover Institution, joining Nobel economics laureate Friedrich A. Hayek and Nobel literature laureate Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

That same year Reagan, a frequent visitor to the institution for briefings on both U.S. and international affairs, donated 20 tons of his gubernatorial papers and memorabilia to the archives.

The Reagan archive is three times larger than any other collection in the Hoover's formidable array.

The institution has important rivals in the think tank business but none with a comparable history or resources. It was founded 61 years ago with a \$50,000 check from the late president, a Stanford alumnus. Hoover found that in his reading of the history of the French Revolution there were precious few documents available and he was determined that contemporary times be adequately recorded.

Hoover did, however, set a tone for the social role he envisioned for the institution. Through its research and publications, he said, the scholars were "to demonstrate the evils of the doctrine of Karl Marx — whether communism, socialism, economic materialism or atheism — thus to protect the American way of life."

Today the concerns of the scholars at the institution, with its 285-foot concrete tower serving as the centerpiece of the university's sun-dappled, palm-fringed campus, range far beyond that.

The facilities include a 1.5 million-volume library housed on eight floors of the tower and archives of 3,800 documents which include the first issue of Pravda. Each year about 1,000 scholars from abroad visit the institution.

Quite clearly it will have an influence on post-Carter Washington policies far greater than its endowment of \$35 million and present annual budget of \$6.6 million would suggest. The institution is financed in large measure by individual, foundation and corporate gifts (44 percent) and by the university (29 percent). U.S. government grants amount to 2 percent. The remainder is drawn from the endowment. Since his appointment in 1960, Campbell has ruled the place with a benign hand. The director places heavy emphasis on selection of scholars who will be admitted to the elite group. But once they are in, they are left pretty much alone to pursue their own research.

"Basically his philosophy on the institution is the same as his approach to the world — it's a laissez-faire, free market place atmosphere in which to work," says one senior fellow. "He knows your general field but I doubt whether he knows the details of the research each individual is doing."

Beside the towering library and archives is the plush Hoover Memorial Building, completed last year at a cost of \$7.5 million as the nation's memorial to the late president. The scholars' offices are carpeted and sunny, lined with books that are often their own.

The agreeable surroundings of lovely lawns, waving palms and nearby tennis courts might seem like a temptation for some to dawdle. But most scholars agree with Thomas Gale Moore, 50, an economist who is one of the country's top experts on deregulation, that "in fact the privileged ambience is conducive to productivity. Occasionally you get someone out here who starts picking mushrooms and playing tennis. But it doesn't happen often."

Alvin Rabushka, a senior fellow conducting a multi-year study on the tax limitation movement and co-editor of the institution's current magnum opus on the 1980s, says that "if scholars just came for the fun of it, we'd be getting low quality people. There's a great deal to be said for the comparative isolation here. The experience is deeper and richer. If you are close to Washington, there is an inclination to engage in gossip and get caught up in artificial deadlines."

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